

TOWN OF MANSFIELD
OFFICE OF THE YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU



Patricia Michalak, MA
Youth Service Bureau Coordinator

**Mansfield YSB Advisory Board
Minutes**

Tuesday April 13, 2010
12:00pm at Mansfield Town Hall
Conference Room B

Board Members

Present:

Ethel Mantzaris, Chair
Frank Perrotti, Co-Chair
Patricia Michalak, YSB Coordinator
Kathleen McNamara, YSB Senior Social Worker
Kevin Grunwald, Director of Human Services
Eileen Griffin, Social Worker
Jerry Marchon, Police Officer
Jeff Smith, Board Member
Teri Hebert, Board Member
Amber Hoyt, EO Smith Student
Lauren DiGrazia, Graduate MSW Intern

Guest: Dan Mainiero, Resident State Trooper

Proceedings

- *Meeting called to order* at 12:02pm by Chair, Ethel Mantzaris
- March 16, 2010 meeting minutes were accepted and approved
- Dan Mainiero was introduced to the board. He will be taking Jerry Marchon's place when Jerry retires from the Town.

- Report from the Director of Human Services, Kevin Grunwald
 - Kevin Grunwald informed the board that Ethel Mantzaris is receiving an award for outstanding youth volunteer through NECASA
 - Kevin Grunwald also discussed the forum that will take place tonight on the one-school project
 - This forum will have two panels:
 - 1 – Panel on implications about one large school
 - 2 – Panel about the financial implications of one school
 - Kevin Grunwald informed the board that the state will only reimburse for new schools not for renovations

- Report from YSB Coordinator, Patricia Michalak
 - Patricia Michalak discussed the recent activities of the YSB.
 - Activities include the following:

- Student Update: Frank Perrotti and Patricia Michalak met with Bruce Silva in regards to assisting Samantha with transition to the High School. We have established a High School mentor for her and we are encouraging participation in our weekly Girl's group. She has attended one group, met her mentor and decided she didn't want to continue. She will continue to work with our student intern who has been making weekly home visits. Bruce Silva has been contacted.
- JOY Program: Sixty Four tickets were donated by the JOY program for our families to attend two performances at Jorgenson: Jack Hanna & the Year of the Frog and Toad. Kathy worked hard calling all of our Cope families to see who would qualify and who were interested. The participants were thrilled to receive the tickets and for many it was their first time on the Uconn Campus.
- Juvenile Justice Community Breakfast: I attended a community meeting sponsored by our state representatives. The theme was that servicing our children in our own communities and avoiding unnecessary contact with the juvenile justice system saves taxpayers money and is more successful in preventing crime. This is because of "zero-tolerance polices" and an over reliance on police to enforce school discipline be. **Children are much more likely to be arrested at school then they were a generation ago. This is putting youth into the system who do not belong there.** Many are Status offenders or youth who run away, are truant or are beyond their parents control and are helped with counseling and other services to stay out of the Juvenile justice system.
- Department of Corrections: I followed up with Michelle Hayward from the Dept of Corrections who continues to check to see if there are children in Mansfield who have parents incarcerated. As of our last discussion there are no new children of parents incarcerated in Mansfield. Mansfield residents are incarcerated but their children are not living in Mansfield.
- Grief Matters: The Grief Matters program has been a huge success. Though our meetings have ended there will be a follow up evaluation meeting for volunteers and a pot luck reunion dinner next fall for all the family participants.
- Girl's Group: We took 6 of the girls from this group to Walmart to purchase their memory books. We are working on memory books of their mothers.
- JUMP program: Villari's Martial Art studio at Storrs had their annual karate tournament at Uconn this month. Some of our children competed at this event which was very exciting and character building.
- PAWS conference: The PAWS conference took place this month and Kathy and I took 14 of our students to this event. The conference teaches the children about handling stress, understanding stereotyping, dealing with feelings of sadness and depression, and healthy vs. unhealthy relationships. Some of the workshops included guided imagery, social justice, and Tae Kwon Do.
- Easter Food Basket: There were a number of YSB families that were supported by the Storrs congregational church this Easter.

Through the generosity of others many of our families were able to have a healthy Easter celebration.

- *Old Business:*

- Advisory Board Member Update*

- Teri Hebert, Special Education Teacher, and Jeff Smith, Former Head of Finance for the town of Mansfield are officially members of the advisory board.

- *New Business:*

- Guest speaker Kathy Ann Easley was unable to attend this meeting
 - Amber Hoyt, EO Smith Student, has decided to attend SCSU next year
 - The Grief Group has ended
 - There was a continuation of the discussion on the elementary school proposal.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 11, 2010

Meeting adjourned at 12:49pm

Minutes submitted by Graduate MSW Intern, Lauren DiGrazia